



**COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE**

713 HALL OF ADMINISTRATION LOS ANGELES
90012

FILED

DEC 21 1991

RICHARD B. DIXON
CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

December 19, 1991

To: Each Supervisor

From: Richard B. Dixon
Chief Administrative Officer

Subject: **COUNTY AIRCRAFT POLICY**

On November 5, 1991, following statements by Supervisor Molina, your Board, on motion of Supervisor Edelman, instructed this office to develop an appropriate policy regarding the use of County aircraft, which would allow elected officials to serve their constituents, but would also prevent abusive use.

In developing a comprehensive policy, both the Sheriff and Fire Department's existing internal policies regarding the use of County aircraft by these departments, as well as availability for use by County departments/agencies were analyzed. Essentially, these existing internal policies (Attachment I) are appropriate, and incorporate many of the concepts discussed by your Board. During fiscal year 1990-91, of 14,670 total flight hours, 89.0 percent were logged by Sheriff aircraft for law enforcement purposes; 10.5 percent were logged by Fire aircraft for fire protection purposes; and the remaining 0.5 percent was logged by Fire aircraft for other County departments including the Board of Supervisors.

Therefore, I recommend continuation of the current department policies and an addition of a general policy on use of County aircraft by County officers and employees as set forth in Attachment II to take effect immediately, unless modified by your Board. This policy establishes the following three priority use levels:

1. Uses associated with law enforcement and fire protection and rescue needs.
2. Uses associated with assisting County departments and agencies with activities related to the requesting department/agency's main mission that could not otherwise be feasibly accomplished.
3. Transportation of any County official in the conduct of County business.

aircraft.m

WE CONSERVE PAPER - COPIES OF THIS DOCUMENT ARE TWO-SIDED

Each Supervisor
December 19, 1991
Page 2



POLICY HIGHLIGHTS

Any priority two or three flight is subject to cancellation if the aircraft is required for law enforcement or fire protection needs. The Sheriff and Fire Department have precise knowledge as to the availability of aircraft for use by County departments and agencies, and because County aircraft are unique resources, the policy establishes responsibility within each department for determining their ability to accommodate requests. The policy also requires that all flight costs are to be fully reimbursed by the requesting department.

Attachment III is a sample of the form which must be submitted by County departments or agencies to request use of an aircraft. By copy of this memorandum, I am instructing each department/district head to utilize this format immediately. Further, to ensure compliance with the countywide policy, we are requesting that the Sheriff and Fire Department compile information to provide your Board, at the end of the current fiscal year, with a report on the use of aircraft by County departments or agencies. We are requesting that in subsequent fiscal years these departments provide such information to you on an annual basis.

This general policy and existing departmental policies will, in my opinion, meet the requirements set forth by your Board to permit public service, including elected officials serving their constituents, but avoid abuse.

RBD:MJH

MM:bjs7

Attachments

c: Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors
All Department Heads

Chapter 4: Flight Operations

4/010.00 DEPLOYMENT OF DEPARTMENTAL AIRCRAFT

As a general rule, Sheriff's Department aircraft shall be used in conjunction with Sheriff's Department law enforcement functions and responsibilities within Los Angeles County. The activities may include, but not be limited to, patrol, search and rescue, surveillance, personnel transportation, and flight training. In all cases, Department aircraft shall be flown in compliance with F.A.R. Part 91. The assigned pilot shall be responsible for evaluating the flight and to abort the flight if it cannot be accomplished within established safety procedures.

The Bureau has been authorized to provide intra-state and inter-state transportation of Departmental members (executives, detectives, and sworn personnel escorting prisoners) upon the request and approval of the concerned Division/Region Chief or Departmental Duty Commander. The concerned Division Chief will request air transportation in those cases where it is most appropriate considering overall expenses, time constraints, and availability of other transportation resources. Priorities and services availability will be at the direction of the Aero Bureau Commander or his designated representative.

Department personnel may request specific flight missions. However, these flights shall be pre-approved by the Bureau Commander or a Bureau lieutenant. Under exigent circumstances or in the absence of authorized Bureau personnel, approval must be obtained from a Region III Area Commander or the Department's Duty Commander.

The Bureau is also authorized to provide emergency medical transportation within Los Angeles County, including requests from the Medical Alert Center (MAC), the Huntington Memorial Hospital Premature Babies Section, or Travinol Labs (blood runs must be coordinated by MAC). This authority may extend into contiguous counties with the approval of the Chief, Field Operations Region III, his designated representative or the Departmental Duty Commander. If a medevac flight requires the call-back of a pilot on an overtime basis, determine from MAC if the patient is stabilized sufficiently to wait for an on-duty pilot. If not, an Aero Bureau lieutenant shall be contacted for overtime authorization.

If requested by MAC, the Bureau will, if resources are available, provide transportation to the Hyperbaric Chamber on Catalina Island for the responding County physician when a medical emergency is declared. These flights will only be approved when a life threatening emergency demands the immediate attention of medical authorities. The Bureau has no obligation to stand-by and provide return transportation to the doctor/s or patient. Subsequent return flights to the mainland may be provided at the patient's expense by private helicopter or vessel.

Miscellaneous flight mission requests from other Los Angeles County Departments or other agencies within Los Angeles County may be approved when prior fiscal arrangements have been completed.

For other than surveillance flights, missions may extend 50 miles into contiguous counties with the approval of the Bureau Commander, (Riverside County is considered contiguous

AERO BUREAU

to Los Angeles County for purposes of this order). If the flight is required to extend beyond 50 miles, the Region III's headquarter's commander shall be notified in addition to obtaining the above approval. Bureau training flights designed to evaluate a pilot's cross country navigational skills under the supervision of a Bureau flight instructor must be pre-approved by the Flight Operations Lieutenant and are exempt from other notifications.

~~4015.00 SERVICE ORIENTED POLICING - "FLY NEIGHBORLY PROGRAM"~~

~~In conjunction with the Department's commitment to service-oriented policing, the Aero Bureau has adopted the "Fly Neighborly Program", emphasizing noise abatement when flying and courteous telephone demeanor when handling noise complaints.~~

~~The Bureau policy regarding noise abatement shall be consistent with programs sponsored by professional aviation organizations encouraging sensitivity to aviation-related noise complaints and abatement efforts. This policy is not intended to alter our current patrol procedures, however, an awareness of the noise generated by our helicopters and attempts to diminish the irritation and subsequent complaints is consistent with a proactive service-oriented policing philosophy.~~

~~Part of the "Fly Neighborly Program" includes a courteous response to noise complaints and professional telephone demeanor. Telephone complaints regarding helicopter noise generated by Bureau aircraft shall be handled courteously by the person taking the complaint. If necessary, a follow-up call shall be made by a Bureau supervisor if requested by the complaining party.~~

~~Formal noise complaints shall be entered in the Watch Commander's pass-on book, noting the follow-up investigation conducted by the on-duty Watch Sergeant. A detailed memo outlining the source and nature of the complaint, involvement of Bureau aircraft, and any other related information shall be directed to the Bureau Commander, through channels.~~

AERO BUREAU

5-08/040.10 Test Administration

The test shall be administered by the polygraph examiner at the Polygraph Section of the Sheriff's Scientific Services Bureau. The examiner shall make the final determination of the form, subject matter, and manner of conducting the interview, after considering case needs and investigator input.

The following precautions shall be observed:

- The test should be given as soon as possible after the subject is in custody
- Excessive conversation with the subject should be avoided as it may destroy the value of the findings.

Note: The tests are designed to supplement, not to take the place of an investigation. Tests are lengthy and should only be scheduled when all parties have sufficient time to complete them.

5-08/040.15 Outside Agency Requests

On request, the use of the polygraph is available to outside agencies. Requests should be made by calling the Polygraph Section of the Sheriff's Scientific Services Bureau.

The same procedures shall be followed in the scheduling, preparation, and administration of the test as are required on Sheriff's cases.

Requests for polygraph examinations involving internal investigations received from outside agencies shall be directed, in writing, to the Office of the Sheriff for approval.

5-08/050.00REQUESTS FOR USE OF AIRCRAFT

All requests for use of aircraft shall be made by contacting the Aero Bureau.

5-08/050.10 Patrol Pilot Responsibility

The Pilot-in-Command of any aircraft responding to an incident shall be responsible for making the determinations outlined in Subsection 5-08/050.25, as they relate to the safety and efficiency of the flight.

5-08/050.15 Requestor's Responsibility

Requests for Aero Bureau's services shall include the following information:

- Name of service desired
- Area to be covered by flight
- Contemplated ground operations
- Number and class of passengers
- Whether observer needed
- Communications or other special equipment needed
- Any other pertinent information.

5-08/050.20 Aero Bureau Responsibility

The Aero Bureau Watch Commander shall be responsible for the scheduling, notification, reporting, and recording of flights and flight requests. He shall also make the following determinations:

- Practicality of the flight based on such factors as weather, terrain, performance, economy, distance, etc.
- Priority of the flight request
- Type of aircraft best suited for the flight
- Most suitable method for coordination with ground forces, when ground support is required
- Amount of aircraft and support equipment required.

5-08/050.25 Safety Precautions

All personnel present at the take-off or landing of a helicopter shall observe the following safety precautions:

- Safety Margin
All persons shall stay at least 50 feet away from the helicopter rotors when the rotor blades are in motion unless authorized otherwise by the pilot or observer.
- Approaching the Aircraft
When approaching a helicopter from within the 50-foot safety margin, the approach shall be made from the front or from the side near the front where the pilot can observe the approaching person at all times.

Unless otherwise instructed by the pilot or observer, never approach or leave the helicopter from any side where the ground is higher than that on which the ship is standing or hovering. Keep head down while making the approach or retreat.

- Leaving the Aircraft
When leaving the helicopter while rotor is in motion, keep head down and walk away directly from the front or side until 50 feet clear of the blades, as rotors lower as RPMs decrease.
- Tail Rotor
Stay away from tail rotors at all times.
- Parked Vehicles
Vehicles and other conveyances shall be kept at least 50 feet from the helicopter, and may be required to stay at a further distance if the pilot or observer so directs.
- Smoking
There shall be no smoking within 100 feet of a helicopter during landing or take-off operations.
- Radio Antennas
Radio antennas on police vehicles shall be fastened down when vehicles are parked in the immediate vicinity of the helicopter landing or take-off area.
- Hand Signals
Hand signals will be utilized by ground units in non-radio communication with the aircraft. See Helicopter Hand Signals (SH-CR-285).

7. HEAVY EQUIPMENT, BRUSH, RESPONSE OUTSIDE L.A. COUNTY OR WITH OTHER AGENCIES

Determine conditions in Los Angeles County regarding weather and equipment available prior to approval.

8. HELICOPTER REQUEST, NON-RESCUE

- A. Requests for helicopter flights from staff members of the Board of Supervisors shall have the Supervisor's approval. Ask requestor if the Supervisor has given approval.
- B. Requests for helicopter flights from another County department not involving a Departmental Service Order require the approval of that Department's Board Chairman.

- C. Requests for helicopter flights from cities must be approved by the Supervisor that serves that city.
- D. Requests for helicopter flights from County departments where a Departmental Service Order will be issued (ask if Departmental Service Order is involved) may be approved.
- E. Requests from the USFS or CDF (involving Departmental Service Order or Order Number) may be approved.
- F. Helicopter flights for representatives of the media will be approved only by the Fire Chief or Chief Deputy.
- G. Any approved flights involving VIPs require a follow-up memo to the Fire Chief.
- H. Prior to approving any request where one or more helicopters are requested by another agency, first check with the Duty Air Officer and inquire regarding availability of ships, weather conditions in Los Angeles County, pilot and crew availability. A Duty Air Officer is always available to provide recommendations.

**LOS ANGELES COUNTY POLICY ON USE OF COUNTY
AIRCRAFT
BY COUNTY DEPARTMENTS AND COUNTY
PERSONNEL**

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish priorities and procedures for use of County aircraft by County Departments and County personnel, notwithstanding internal policies established by the Sheriff and Fire Department deemed necessary in the execution of their duties.

POLICY

Priority for use of County aircraft shall be established as follows:

1. As required in conjunction with law enforcement, and fire protection. These activities may include, but not be limited to; patrol, search and rescue, surveillance, firefighting, flight training, and other emergency situations as determined by the Sheriff or Fire Chief.
2. As required by other County departments and agencies in conjunction with activities related to provision of the requesting department or agency's main mission. These activities may include, but not be limited to; aerial mapping, surveillance of facilities and/or structures, tours for visiting dignitaries, and other County related business activities which the requesting department head has determined cannot economically or efficiently be conducted on the ground.

3. As required for transportation of any County officer the conduct of County business, when such transportation cannot be economically or efficiently provided by automobile, bus, train, or boat.

PROCEDURES

The following procedures shall be followed with regards to the use of County aircraft:

1. A completed aircraft request form must be submitted to the Sheriff or Fire Department prior to the flight date.
2. All flight requests are subject to availability of aircraft and approval by individuals designated by the Sheriff and the Fire Chief. A priority two or three flight is subject to cancellation if at any time the aircraft is required for a priority one use.
3. Priority two and three flights will be provided to the requesting department on a cost recovery basis.
4. The Sheriff and Fire Chief shall provide annual reports, based on the fiscal year, to the Board of Supervisors on all priority two and three flights conducted during the reporting period. The report shall identify by requesting department, the purpose of flight, number of people, length and duration of flight, and cost of flight.

MM:bjs7

REQUEST FOR USE OF COUNTY AIRCRAFT

REQUESTING DEPARTMENT

 AIRCRAFT
REQUESTED OF

☐ Sheriff
☐ Fire

Date Required:

Beginning Time:

Type of Aircraft

Ending Time:

Trip Destination

PURPOSE

PASSENGERS

 1. _____ 3. _____ 5. _____
 2. _____ 4. _____ 6. _____

DSO # _____

DEPARTMENT HEAD AUTHORIZATION

DATE

FOR INTERNAL USE BY SHERIFF/FIRE ONLY

Approved by _____ Date _____

PRIORITY USE

☐ PRIORITY TWO☐ PRIORITY THREENumber of
Passengers

Date of Trip

Beginning Time

Ending Time

Miles Traveled

DSO Number